

All data are used by the State to determine the status of personnel standards in the State. The determination is based on current information that accurately describes, for each profession or discipline in which personnel are providing special education or related services, whether the applicable standards are consistent with the highest requirements in the State for that profession or discipline. Information is on file at the State office and is available to the public.

Applicability of State Statutes and Agency Rules

In identifying the highest requirements in the State for purposes of this section, the requirements of all State statutes and the rules of all State agencies applicable to serving children with disabilities are considered.

Use of Paraprofessionals and Assistants

Missouri allows paraprofessionals, paraeducators and assistants who are appropriately trained and supervised to be used to assist in the provision of special education and related services to children with disabilities.

Local school district must provide each paraprofessional or paraeducator with the orientation and training necessary for the individual to perform the duties associated with the work assignment. At a minimum, such training shall include information and experiences related to:

- A. the type of disabilities displayed by the students with whom they will work;
- B. basic principles of behavior modification;
- C. basic instructional techniques expected to be used (demonstration, modeling, cueing, reinforcement, correction, etc.); and,
- D. other areas as necessary (positioning, lifting and transferring techniques, feeding procedures, etc.).

Paraprofessionals and paraeducators who do not hold a teaching certificate shall receive a minimum of 15 hours of training during their initial year of employment and a minimum of ten (10) hours of training in subsequent years.

[Policy to Address Shortage of Personnel]

It is the policy of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to require local education agencies in the State to recruit and hire appropriately and adequately trained personnel to provide special education and related services to children with disabilities. In those instances when an appropriately and adequately trained individual cannot be employed, including a geographic area of the State where there is a shortage of personnel that meet the qualifications, local education agencies may employ the most qualified individual available who is making satisfactory progress toward completing applicable course work necessary to meet the standards described in this section, consistent with the steps described above within three years.

The State may still exercise the option under this section for training or hiring of personnel in a specific profession or discipline if shortages continue to exist. The State requires districts to serve children with disabilities with the most qualified individuals available when instructional needs exceed available personnel who meet appropriate professional requirements in the State for a specific profession or discipline.]